

Nursing Innovators - teaming with ideas

Govier I M (2000) Teaming with ideas.
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In our occasional profiles of professionals, Maura Thompson asks nurses managing evolving services to describe their work. This week she speaks to Ian Govier, Senior Nurse - Professional Development and Training Manager, NHS Direct Wales.

Describe your current job

I started work with NHS Direct Wales at the beginning of the year and the past two months have probably been the busiest of my nursing career. I am currently completing the training programmes for both the Senior Nurse Advisers and Nurse Advisers who will take up their posts in March and April respectively. My role is also to assist in identifying and supporting professional development needs amongst the nursing team.

Additionally, I've been heavily involved in road shows throughout Wales to recruit nursing staff to the service and I'm currently playing a key role in the selection of the nurse team. My role also involves establishing links with colleagues in clinical and educational settings throughout England and Wales.

What was your career path?

My clinical nursing experience has primarily been in trauma specialities having spent some time working in Accident and Emergency and Burns Trauma environments since qualifying as a nurse in the mid 1980s. I entered full-time nurse education in the early nineties and completed my teacher training during this time.

However, the opportunity to lead a ward in a brand new burns unit in 1994 was one that I didn't want to miss and I've spent the last five to six years working as a charge nurse / ward manager on an adult burns ward. I was seconded to the Nursing Division of a large district general hospital for most of last year which provided an excellent opportunity for personal development as well as allowing a greater insight into professional and operational matters within the NHS.

I have been a commissioned officer in the Territorial Army Medical Services since 1991 and until recently, undertook part-time teaching on an MSc nursing course at Swansea Institute of Higher Education.

What attracted you to this job?

I'd been following the progress of NHS Direct for several months and when the chance arose in December of last year to apply for this particular position, I jumped at it!

How many staff do you manage?

By the end of this year there will be approximately 60 to 70 nurses for whom I'll have management responsibilities.

How many hours a week do you work?

I'm contracted to 37.5 hours a week, but in reality I'm putting in between 50 and 60 hours. I'm looking forward to delegating some work to the Senior Nurse Advisers as being part of a small project team means that each member is putting in long hours.

What is the most satisfying part of your work?

Being involved at the early stages of NHS Direct Wales is particularly satisfying, especially as the planning comes to fruition. Having the nursing voice heard in the shaping of the service is very refreshing.

What is the most frustrating thing about your job?

Listening to colleagues who know little about the service but nevertheless make uninformed comments.

What is the biggest challenge you face in the coming year?

Fitting in annual leave! Seriously though, there will be several challenges this year as NHS Direct establishes itself in Wales. One of the challenges will be to deliver a bilingual service and to positively influence some of the negative opinions that pervade health care colleagues - including nurses.

How do you relax?

After being on the wrong end of a hit and run car accident 2 years ago, my previous lively pursuits of surfing, rock climbing, racket sports, running and the TA have taken a back seat. I particularly enjoy being with my family and playing the piano, guitar and singing. My most recent interest is birdwatching which I find quite absorbing and a welcome distraction from day to day work.

What has been the high point of your career?

There have been many high points but if I were to identify one, it would have been the opportunity to lead a team of nurses when the Welsh Regional Burns facility opened at Morriston Hospital, Swansea in 1994. The ward quickly established a reputation for high standards of nursing care and was invited to apply for Charter Mark and Health Promotion awards in 1997. The nursing team were committed and enthusiastic and this reflected in the service offered to patients.

If you had chosen a career other than nursing, what would it have been?

Music has always been my first love and I would have been very happy pursuing a career allied to this important aspect of my life.

What would you like to do in the future?

I'd like to see NHS Direct establish itself in Wales and the UK and be part of the service as it evolves into other aspects of primary care. The future is exciting!

Could you see yourself working in a hospital again?

If the right opportunity arose, then I would obviously consider it.

Ian M.Govier

Senior Nurse - Professional Development
and Training Manager, NHS Direct Wales.
